

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 0059

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EG
SUBJECT: FAHMY ON LIPPMAN WASHINGTON POST INTERVIEW WITH SADAT

REF: 76 CAIRO 18018

1. CALLED ON FAHMY TODAY TO OBTAIN CLARIFICATION
OF SADAT'S RECENT COMMENT TO WASHINGTON POST
CORRESPONDENT LIPPMAN REPORTED REFTTEL, PARTICULARLY
SADAT'S ALLEGED INSISTENCE THAT ANY PALESTINIAN
STATE CREATED AS RESULT OF MEPC "MUST BE
FORMALLY LINKED WITH JORDAN." AFTER FIRST
RAISING ANOTHER MATTER VERY MUCH ON HIS MIND
(SEPTTEL), FAHMY ADDRESSED HIMSELF TO LIPPMAN
INTERVIEW.

2. HE WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT HAPPY WITH INTERVIEW
AS REPORTED AND CLAIMED LIPPMAN'S SUMMARY OF
SADAT'S PERTINENT STATEMENT WAS NOT A TRUE
REFLECTION OF WHAT SADAT HAD SAID. HE, FAHMY,
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HAD THE TRANSCRIPT. SADAT HAD NEVER SAID THAT
ANY PALESTINIAN STATE "MUST RPT MUST BE FORMALLY
LINKED WITH JORDAN." INSTEAD, IN ANSWER TO
LIPPMAN'S QUESTION, SADAT HAD RECALLED HIS '74
MEETING WITH HUSSEIN IN ALEXANDRIA AND HIS IDEA
AT THE TIME THAT SOME RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE
PALESTINIANS AND JORDAN SHOULD BE DECLARED WHENEVER

A PALESTINIAN STATE IS CREATED. THIS, THE PRESIDENT HAD INDICATED, IS STILL HIS CONCEPT, ALTHOUGH ITS IMPLEMENTATION SHOULD COME ABOUT AS A RESULT OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PALESTINAINS AND JORDAN. SADAT HAD NOT SAID THERE "MUST" BE SUCH A LINK, FAHMY REPEATED, BUT HAD EXPRESSED PERSONAL VIEW AS TO WHAT WOULD BE DESIRABLE, PROVIDED BOTH THE PALESTINIANS AND JORDANIANS AGREE.

3. FAHMY WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE ALEXANDRIA MEETING WITH HUSSEIN IS AGAIN VERY MUCH ON SADAT'S MIND. THE PRESIDENT, HE RELATED, IS CONSTANTLY REMINDING HIM OF THE ALEXANDRIA COMMUNIQUE, WHICH FAHMY DRAFTED. THE CONCEPTS CONTAINED THEREIN OUGHT STILL TO BE VALID. FAHMY CLAIMS HE HAS REMINDED THE PRESIDENT THAT THE ALEXANDRIA COMMUNIQUE WAS DRAFTED IN DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES. NEITHER SADAT, NOR ANYONE ELSE, FAHMY INSISTED, CAN DETERMINE WHAT, IF ANY, ARRANGEMENTS A FUTURE PALESTINIAN STATE MAY WISH TO WORK OUT WITH ITS NEIGHBORS. ONLY THE PALESTINIANS THEMSELVES CAN DECIDE WHETHER THEY WISH TO REMAIN TOTALLY INDEPENDENT OR CONFEDERATE WITH JORDAN OR ANY OTHER STATE. GOE CAN PERHAPS ENCOURAGE TEM TO DO SO, BUT DECISION IS THEIRS. ASKED IF SADAT'S STATEMENT MEANS GOE IS PREPARED ENCOURAGE PALESTINIANS TO ESTABLISH LINK WITH JORDAN, FAHMY SAID THIS WILL HAVE TO BE CONFIDENTIAL

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DETERMINED AT A LATER POINT. SO FAR AS HE WAS CONCERNED, HE WOULD PERSONALLY BE HAPPY TO HAVE GAZA FORMALLY INCORPORATED INTO EGYPT AND THE WEST BANK INTO JORDAN. HOWEVER, THE PALESTINIANS AND NOT HE OR SADAT MUST MAKE ANY SUCH EVENTUAL DETERMINATION.

4. FAHMY NOTED JORDANIAN AND ISRAELI REACTION TO THE LIPPMAN INTERVIEW HAS BEEN FAVORABLE. IN CONTRAST, ALL OF PALESTINIAN WEST BANK MAYORS EXCEPT ONE HAVE REJECTED THE CONCEPT. THIS, IN HIS VIEW, SHOWS HOW LITTLE POPULARITY CONCEPT CURRENTLY HAS AMONG WEST BANKERS. ALTHOUGH PLO LEADERS HERE WERE SOMEWHAT TAKEN ABACK BY PUBLICATION OF SADAT STATEMENT, THEY HAVE BEEN ASSURED GOE POSITION REMAINS THAT ANY SUCH DECISION MUST BE MADE BY PALESTINIANS. THE SUBJECT, THEY HAVE INDICATED, CAN BE DISCUSSED AT UPCOMING PNC MEETING IN CAIRO, FEBRUARY 2.

5. COMMENT: FAHMY WAS CLEARLY CONCERNED ABOUT POST'S REPORTAGE LEST IT CREATE MISUNDERSTANDING ON PART PLO AND OTHERS OF GOE POSITION. WE HAVE CHECKED TEXT OF LIPPMAN ARTICLE, AS SENT NESA WIRELESS FILE NO. 252, AGAINST PERTINENT SECTIONS OF TRANSCRIPT MADE AVAILABLE TO US BY LIPPMAN. THERE IS A DISCREPANCY, WHICH COULD BE THE RESULT OF WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL REWRITE. SADAT DID NOT RPT NOT AT ANY POINT SAY THERE "MUST BE LINKAGE BETWEEN PALESTINE AND JORDAN," BUT SIMPLY INDICATED HIS PAST AND CONTINUING BELIEF THAT SOME SORT OF A CONFEDERATION BETWEEN THEM WOULD BE USEFUL. AS ONE MODEL, HE CITED EGYPTIAN/SYRIAN/LIBYAN CONFEDERATION. BY NO STRETCH OF THE IMAGINATION WAS HIS STATEMENT A "DEMAND," AS CLAIMED IN LIPPMAN ARTICLE, AND CONFIDENTIAL

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TRANSCRIPT CLEARLY SHOWS SADAT SAID THAT ANY SUCH ARRANGEMENTS WOULD HAVE TO BE AGREED UPON. NOR DOES SADAT INTERVIEW REPUDIATE RABAT DECISION RE PLO, AS SOME ISRAELI COMMENTATORS SEEM TO BE SUGGESTING.

6. IMMEDIATELY BEFORE LIPPMAN INTERVIEW, SADAT SAW NBC CORRESPONDENT GARRICK UTLEY AND, WE UNDERSTAND, MADE NO SUGGESTION TO HIM ON THE NEED FOR A FORMAL LINKAGE. HE SAW MARTIN AGRONSKY SHORTLY AFTERWARDS, BUT WE WERE NOT ABLE TO GET A READING ON SUBSTANCE OF THAT INTERVIEW PRIOR TO AGRONSKY'S DEPARTURE. (WE UNDERSTAND IT WILL BE SHOWN JAN 7 AND WOULD APPRECIATE SUMMARY CABLE.) IN SHORT, APART FROM INDICATION THAT SADAT IS PUBLICLY REVERTING TO HIS 1974 BELIEF THAT JORDANIANS AND PALESTINIANS SHOULD WORK TOGETHER, LIPPMAN INTERVIEW DOES NOT REALLY BREAK ANY NEW GROUND. POST AND WE UNDERSTAND AP AS WELL TO HAVE OVERPLAYED SADAT'S COMMENTS. LOCAL AP CORRESPONDENT ANNOYED SINCE AP STORY SEEMS HAVE BEEN BASED ENTIRELY ON POST ACCOUNT AND WAS NOT FIRST CHECKED OUT WITH HIM. EILTS

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